

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Cancelled)
2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of determining by said processor for said program to be buffered is a predictive process, based on a frequency measurement of previously watched programs
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of determining said one program of interest is a predictive process based on specific programs watched.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of determining said one program of interest is a predictive process based on the genre of programs watched.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32 wherein the step of determining said one program of interest is a predictive process based on the recommendations of other users of the system.
6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the recommendations of other users are extracted from Web Log entries.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein the recommendations of other users are extracted by the processor from one or more messages from an instant messaging service.
8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 5 wherein the recommendations of other users are extracted by the processor from on-line reviews.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 wherein the recommendations of other users are extracted by the processor from one or more email messages.
10. (Cancelled).
11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) In a system for distributing content to users over channels, said system including a microprocessor and a buffer for selectively storing content shown on a channel, a method for buffering in a media presentation device, the method comprising the steps of:  
determining by the microprocessor, that at least one channel of interest to a user is within a previous time slot, wherein said channel has not been preselected by the user for recording for said previous time slot;

buffering in a buffer a portion of a program on said channel during a corresponding later time slot for a first time period, said first time period being shorter than the duration of said time slot; and

detecting, by said processor, if a user starts watching said channel on said presentation device within said first time period;

stopping the buffering of the program if a user does not start watching said channel within said first time period; and

flushing said buffer after the buffering is stopped.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of determining said one channel is based on a list of channels most recently viewed by the user.

13. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of determining said one channel is a predictive process based on a frequency measure of channels watched within the same timeslot of a previous day.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of determining said channel is a predictive process based on a frequency measure of channels watched within the same time slot of a previous week.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of determining said channel is a predictive process based on the genre of channels being watched and previously watched.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the step of determining said channel is a predictive process based on recommendations.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the buffering of the portion of a program on said channel continues until a channel of higher interest is found, after which the buffering commences of a portion of a program on said channel of higher interest.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for predictive buffering of programs having program beginnnings in a media recorder, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a first signal containing a first set of television programs program at a first receiving subsystem, said first program being received and starting at the beginning of a predetermined first time slot;

receiving a second signal containing a second program set of television programs at a second receiving subsystem during a predetermined second time slot, which at least partially overlaps said first time slot;

buffering at least a portion of one program from the first set of television programs said first program in said first time slot starting with the beginning of said first program while presenting or recording at least said second one program from the second set of television programs, wherein said buffering is

initiated in a selected time slot and is terminated if a user does not start watching said one program within a predetermined interval from the beginning of said first time slot.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 19 wherein selection of the at least one said first program from the first set of television programs is based on a predictive process.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 19 wherein selection of the at least one said first program from the first set of television programs is based on an input from the user.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Cancelled)

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A system for predictive buffering in a media recorder, the system comprising:

a predictive program selection subsystem, wherein the predictive program selection subsystem selects at least one program of interest to a user without receiving a command from the user to buffer said program, said one program being received at the beginning of a time slot; and

a buffering subsystem including a buffer that buffers a portion of said one program from the beginning of said time slot while when the said one program is not watched by a user, said buffering system being adapted to selectively terminate said buffering if a user does not start watching said program within a predetermined time period after the beginning of said time slot, said buffering subsystem further being configured to flush said buffer at the end of said predetermined time period if the user does not start watching the program within said predetermined time period.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A system for predictive buffering in a media recorder, the system comprising:

a predictive channel selection subsystem that selects at least one channel of interest to a user, said channel showing a program having a program duration during a predetermined time slot; and  
a user identifying subsystem, which identifies whether a user is watching said channel during said predetermined time slot;  
a buffering subsystem that buffers said one channel for a buffering duration shorter than said program duration if the user does not start watching said channel during said buffering duration.

28. (Cancelled).

29 (CURRENTLY AMENDED). The system of claim 27 wherein said channel selection system selects said channel of interest from a time slot on a grid listing a plurality of time slots corresponding to channels during an extended time period.

30 (CURRENTLY AMENDED). The system of claim 30 29 wherein said grid covers a week.

31 (Previously Presented). The system of claim 27 wherein said one channel is selected based on what the viewer has been watching in the past.

32 (CURRENTLY AMENDED). In a content distribution system in which programs are provided to various users, a method of time shifting a program comprising:

using a processor to determine if at least one program being distributed in the system is of interest to a user, said program having a starting point;

starting to buffer said one program from its starting point if said processor determines that said program is of interest to a user;

monitoring a program presenting apparatus with said processor to determine if the user starts watching said one program after said buffering has started; and

causing said program presenting apparatus to show said program from its starting point, automatically by said processor, if it is determined that the user has started watching the program after said buffering has started.

33 (Cancelled).

34 (Cancelled).

35 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 11 wherein said timeslot is selected from a grid defining programs over an extended time period on different channels.

36 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 35 wherein said grid is a weekly grid and said timeslot defines a program distributed at a particular day, time and channel.

37 (CURRENTLY AMENDED). The method of claim 32 wherein said step buffering said program is performed using a personal video recorder.

38 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 37 wherein said monitoring is performed by said personal video recorder.

39 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 37 wherein said program is buffered for a predetermined duration.

40 (Previously Presented). The method of claim 39 wherein said program has a program duration and said predetermined duration is shorter than said program duration.

41 (Cancelled).

42 (Cancelled).

43 (CURRENTLY AMENDED). In a system for distributing content from a content provider to a plurality of viewers, each viewer having a content presentation device, a method comprising:

transmitting a program having a program duration to a plurality of content presentation devices;

selectively recording said program at each presentation device for a predetermined time period;

determining by said system if a particular viewer is starting indicates that he wants to watch said program after the program has started but within said time period; and

if a particular viewer starts watching said program late after the program has started but within said predetermined time period, then automatically presenting said program to said viewer from its beginning by using said recording.

44 (CURRENTLY AMENDED). The method of claim 43 wherein the system further comprises a recording device selectively recording programs further comprising monitoring the presentation device associated with the particular user when the respective recording device has not been set to record said program, said monitoring being performed to detect when said particular viewer starts watching indicates that he wants to watch the program.

45 (Cancelled).

46 (Cancelled).

47 (Previously presented). The method of claim 19 further comprising flushing a buffer used to buffer said first program if a user does not start watching said program within said predetermined interval.